

## Creativity at Work:

# The cultural of production and career in the Danish film industry: the ideological symbiosis of 'auteur' and 'craftsperson'

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## Abstract

This chapter explores some of the central cultural tenets of career and film making among elite members of the Danish film industry, or what is less than elegantly and somewhat grammatically incorrectly referred to as 'the cultural of production and career' in the title of this chapter. The theoretical reasons for this formulation is to train focus on the ideational dimensions of culture in the Danish film industry, especially as refracted through reflections on work and career by film workers. In this sense the approach, though less inclusive and ambitious, resembles Caldwell's interest in 'indigenous interpretive frameworks in Production Culture.<sup>i</sup> The chapter also argues that production and career decisions and actions are inextricable intertwined. Sometimes the two are consciously and manifestly related to each other, in terms of deliberating the implications that working on a given film, with given persons, in a given manner, etc. will have on one's further work possibilities; or the reverse, how career considerations impact how films get made in terms of who works on them and what resources, skills, tastes, and perspectives are brought into and realized in a production. Sometimes the interrelation of these considerations remains latent. This chapter explores how certain cultural underpinnings support these mutually intertwined considerations.

## Keywords

Film industry, auteur, creative space, inter-professional collaboration

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## Introduction

This chapter explores some of the central cultural tenets of career and film making among elite members of the Danish film industry, or what is less than elegantly and somewhat grammatically incorrectly referred to as 'the cultural of production and career' in the title of this chapter. The theoretical reasons for this formulation is to train focus on the ideational dimensions of culture in the Danish film industry, especially as refracted through reflections on work and career by film workers. In this sense the approach, though less inclusive and ambitious, resembles Caldwell's interest in 'indigenous interpretive frameworks in Production Culture.<sup>ii</sup> The chapter also argues that production and career decisions and actions are inextricable intertwined. Sometimes the two are consciously and manifestly related to each other, in terms of deliberating the implications that working on a given film, with given persons, in a given manner, etc. will have on one's further work possibilities; or the reverse, how career considerations impact how films get made in terms of who works on them and what resources, skills, tastes, and perspectives are brought into and realized in a production. Sometimes the interrelation of these considerations remains latent. This chapter explores how certain cultural underpinnings support these mutually intertwined considerations. Furthermore, this chapter focuses on how the content of several of these cultural considerations support a particular form of auteur ideology and practice form in the Danish film industry, and displays how this ideology is constituted by discrete cultural components rather than being a command-and-control overall coordinating ideal. The argument here is that

the auteur ideology does not have its operative power as a top down steering logic, but rather from the confluence of more partial cultural understandings. Some of these are bundled into larger figures, such as the notion of the 'craftsperson,' which is a living cultural notion among our informants. Interestingly enough, the notion of 'auteur' is substantively absent from the discursive level amongst our informants except as a label for the overall system. The director is just 'the director,' or as we will see below, a vulnerable position and person in need of care.

Before going any further, what is meant by production and career in this chapter should be clarified. 'Production' refers simply to the planning and executing of work contributing to making a film. Production considerations and decisions here are merely delimited considerations and decisions manifestly oriented towards making a film, as opposed to an alternative understanding of 'production' as in 'production design' which connotes an overarching conceptualization of the entire film. Career is defined in the more relaxed contemporary definition of the term as "the evolving sequence of a person's work experiences over time,"<sup>iii</sup> as opposed to the once current notion of career as equivalent to the 'organizational career' entailing an escalating succession of jobs held in a single or limited number of organizational contexts.<sup>iv</sup> Career also connotes subjective and objective dimensions of 'the evolving sequence of a person's work experiences over time.'

Thus, using career or work-history as an avenue of inquiry opens up not just access to facts about what an individual has accomplished over time, but also how it has been accomplished as well as subjective assessments of the meanings of what has been accomplished and the means of accomplishment, as well as particular episodes and more cumulative retrospective assessments of one's work.<sup>v</sup> More particularly, this means of inquiry opens up issues of changes in opportunity and motivation over one's working life, what is rewarded as well as what individuals find rewarding, and assessments of demands, norms, and degrees and areas of conformity and deviance permitted in the Danish film industry from a cultural perspective as subjects are accounting for their histories and contextual factors in their own words. In other words, even of the cultural is not manifestly the object of accounting, the cultural is lodged squarely at the center of the accounting process, as will be discussed in the following section.

Why might one be interested in the Danish film industry and its contemporary cultural foundations? One reason is its multifaceted success. It can reasonably be argued that the Danish film industry has been extraordinarily successful in significant parameters, including, artistic and commercial success, and talent development and retention dimensions. Secondly, this success has been sustained over a long period of time - approximately 20 years, and shows few signs of abating.<sup>vi</sup> Thirdly, it has been argued that the 'Danish model' is somewhat unique.<sup>vii</sup> This chapter provides insight into the cultural foundations of this highly successful and possibly in

other respects quite unique film industry from the perspective of some of its most central and influential filmmakers.

This chapter presents a qualitative exposé based on in-depth interviews with leading figures in the Danish film industry. The data presented here sometimes gives a fairly uniform picture, sometimes it give an impression of heterogeneity. As Sewell argues, cultural analysis is about both convergence and divergence, 'Our job as cultural analysts is to discern what the shapes and consistencies of local meanings actually are, and to determine how, why and to what extent they hang together.'<sup>viii</sup> The primary purpose of this chapter is much in line with Sewell's fundamental aspirations for cultural analysis - explore and explain 'local meanings,' in this case in the Danish film industry to see where they derive from and how they are interconnected, possibly mutually supportive, and what wider systems particular meanings are in part organized by and in part support or challenge. However, the ambitions of this chapter exceed merely analyzing the origins and patterns of cultural orientations, and seek to discern what impacts they have on dispositions towards individual and collective conduct.

The structure of this chapter is fairly simple. In the following section the distinction between 'the cultural' and 'culture' is elaborated in order to clarify the primary subject matter of the chapter. This is followed by a presentation of the sampling and methodological foundations of the empirical material that the chapter rests upon. The analytical heart of the chapter is the thematic discussion of the key cultural frames (and some counter-frames) in the Danish film industry about work, production, and career, especially as they relate to the broader auteur ideology. Some concluding remarks round off the chapter.

#### The 'cultural' versus 'culture'

The reason for differentiating the 'cultural' from 'culture' is simplification. As used in this chapter, the cultural refers exclusively to normative ideas about contextually appropriate action on the one hand, and cognitive ideas about the nature of reality. Both normative and cognitive ideas are what DiMaggio calls 'the content' as opposed to the 'styles or mechanisms' of cognition (which according to many accounts are also impacted by culture).<sup>ix</sup> This narrow definition of the cultural can be contrasted with the term 'culture,' which is a much more cluttered concept, usually entailing not just the cultural ideas specified above, but also culturally influenced practices and their behavioral and physical manifestations, which usually amounts to everything produced by human beings. The cultural refers to the former, whereas culture refers to the latter. In separating the cultural from culture it is possible to focus on the ideational level, rather than examining processes and events that are impacted by cultural as well as social, political, economic, historical, etc. factors. It is absolutely not my contention that the cultural is a 'pure' realm, unaffected by the aforementioned, indeed the 'cultural' is largely made up of ideal interpretations and renderings of 'culture' broadly understood.

Thus, in the formulation used here, the cultural is the discursively articulable surface of 'culture.' The relationship between culture and the cultural can be empirically investigated, but more frequently is only implied or contended as connected. In other words, the articulable 'local meanings' are the top of the iceberg for cultural analysts, as what is inarticulable, i.e. tacit knowledge, practical, or non-discursive knowledge or capabilities are not, by definition verbally accessible (though possibly observable in conduct), as well as what produces or causes precisely some, and not other discursive formulations to be constructed and deployed in a given circumstance. What is instructive about studying what is articulated is that it shows evidence of what individuals have close to hand in planning and/or explaining their action and conduct. It also gives strong indications about what ideas are current and circulated in a given context or group. In other words, through speech people not only reflect their own thought processes, but also those in the wider environments which they are familiar with.

A second central theoretical anchor for the understanding of the role of the cultural in this chapter is Ann Swidler's 'toolkit' approach.<sup>x</sup> Swidler makes several useful distinctions or differentiations. She distinguishes between what she calls 'settled and unsettled lives,' with 'settled lives' being periods where the cultural orientations in use are unquestioned, as they are perceived to perform satisfactorily in mediating thought and action about behavior and the state of the world, and 'unsettled lives' where cultural beliefs are in crisis and called into question due to actual or perceived discrepancies about behavior or the state of the world. Unsettled lives are periods of questioning and the search for better cultural resources (similar to Joas' conception of what provokes 'creative action'<sup>xi</sup>). The toolkit notion differs from 'dictatorial' notions of culture as dictating particular beliefs and behaviors in claiming that there exist broad repertoires, far more materials than are used, and actors are aware many of the repertoires that they do not use, and are aware of what is pertinent to oneself and others. In this sense, informants can talk about themselves, other specific individuals, and generalized others - 'colleagues,' the 'branch' or 'industry,' other 'branches' or 'industries' domestically or abroad, or 'society' in terms of the cultural tools that are deployed. Or in Swidler's words, 'people know much more of their culture than they use.'<sup>xii</sup> Likewise, the toolkit approach promotes the idea that not everything in the toolkit is useful and true - culture is rife with falsity, pretenders, multiple solutions, inappropriate conceptions and advice, and that it is up to the individual to be a prudent user and modifier of cultural materials. Again, in Swidler's words, 'Indeed, most of our active cultural involvement in everyday life is not joyful participation in shared ritual, but the demanding work of dismissing, criticizing, or filtering the culture with which we come in contact.'<sup>xiii</sup> Swidler further explains the conception of active involvement in and with culture: 'If people in some sense choose among diverse cultural resources and put them to use in different ways, culture's effects are mediated by such variability. ... There are not simply

different cultures: there are different ways of mobilizing and using culture, different ways of linking culture to action.'xiv

Despite the toolkit idea, cultural notions are not 'free-floating.' They circulate and are pronounced and taught, but their durability at the individual and collective level frequently rests upon being 'corroborated' in some manner by experience – observed or personal.

#### Methods and sampling

The empirical foundation for this chapter lies primarily in in-depth, career history interviews with established 'elite' filmworkers in the Danish film industry in the occupational categories of director, producer, cinematographer (director of photography) and editor.xv Discerning who 'elite' members were of the Danish film industry was accomplished by using lists of the top 10 domestic Danish box office feature films over the past 15 years as well as the films and individuals nominated for the national film awards in Denmark (Roberts and Bodils), as well as international awards over the same period. 'Elite' entailed either working on two or more of these productions or garnering two or more prize nominations. To identify younger emerging talents in these occupational categories, a degree of reputational sampling was undertaken. A second qualifying factor was working regularly. What regular work is varies naturally from occupational category to occupational category, with directors making on average one film every third year, while most producers, editors, cinematographers, etc. are credited on average one feature film per year.xvi From these brutto lists a minimum of 10 interviews were carried out with individuals whose primary activities fall within a given occupational categories. Semi-structured career history interviews were then carried out with the 58 persons who agreed to participate in the project. The interviews were held face-to-face, digitally recorded and lasted 1½ to 5 hours. The interviews sought to chart career history over time, and the cultural understandings presented in this analysis emerge surreptitiously as the informants discuss their careers, work, productions and the industry. The oldest interviewee was 85, the youngest, 31. We also sought to attain as gender balanced a sample as possible, though as with the international norm, female cinematographers are also very rare in Denmark.

The reason why we chose to focus on elite members of the Danish film industry was to gain insight into what the predominant cultural resources and hierarchies pertaining to production and career thinking are. The sample of the established elite gives us insight into the explanations and dilemmas of success in terms of cultural understandings such as norms, expectations and expectations. Even among the established elite a breadth of personal experience and observations are available, as only a few individuals obtain acclaim and success directly. Most members of what is defined as the established elite can also retrospectively discuss initial or subsequent periods of 'paying dues,' uncertainty and insecurity. The elite is interesting in other

words because they have (had) multiple vantage points in the industry (at least vertically). It was also assumed that such members of the industry have both an historical and depth of experience in working in the industry that affords them the opportunity to make deep contrasts, reveal the variation that is found within the industry, as well as changes over time. However, it is clear that 'elite' status does impact the experience and perspectives of our respondents. This is illustrated in the following quote from a female editor: "my [ex-]husband works as a cinematographer, he works really hard, takes all kinds of work, he takes anything he is offered. He doesn't get to choose like me. I'd done a big thing [name of film] and he'd done documentaries. ... I was very secure going on parental leave. There is a lot of angst in the film branch about being forgotten, but I didn't have that because I'd just done that film [name of film again]. I knew I'd be fine, but my husband, he couldn't think that way because he hadn't done anything that people recognized. He just trudged on, and he still does."

The cultural foundations of 'auteurism' in the Danish film industry – the cultural resources behind role, order, and hierarchy

In spite of Danish film having received a large degree of attention in relation to its volume of production and its size, the industry itself is probably not very well known. There have been some scholarly works in English that give overviews or delve into specific aspects or trends in Danish film.<sup>xvii</sup> What is most widely associated with Danish film outside Denmark are probably the Dogme 95 movement, Lars von Trier, Susanne Bier, Mads Mikkelsen, Lone Scherfig, Bille August, the production companies Nimbus, Zentropa, Nordisk Film, and possibly the film *The Celebration*, and more historically Carl Th. Dreyer. Behind or below this line of recognized individuals, productions and production companies are several institutional factors. One is what, at least is (possibly was) referred to in Denmark as 'the world's best film school,' the National Film School of Denmark. Another is what also in Denmark was described as 'the world's best film subsidy agreement' though this agreement has changed form a couple of times in the past decade, but the core idea, to channel a set and predictable amount of financing directly from the state budget into various forms of film production. Denmark still has a fairly well-functioning publically financed subsidy system and finance distribution agency in the Danish Film Institute, with some monies channeled through two terrestrial TV broadcasters. A small but not insignificant amount of funding comes via sub-national regional film funds. In sum, this funding secures a more or less stable volume of production, which for feature films fluctuates around 25 releases per year. Another structural factor is that the industry is quite small and intimate, maybe not literally to the extent described in the following quote by one cinematographer we interviewed, but by some accounts not too far off: 'It is a little branch, everyone knows each other, and have been married to each other and slept with each other.' Though small, the consensus is that it is getting bigger or at least broader, if not in terms of volume of production at least in



terms of people and companies and genres, as well as the emergence of an alternative channel into the industry via the film school Super 16 and not just the National Film School of Denmark, which retains its elite status, but is no longer the exclusive channel into the upper echelon of the industry.

Additionally it should be mentioned that there are burgeoning adjacent industries to the film industry in Denmark. The TV industry has during the most recent decade enjoyed national success and international acclaim, and Theatre has also experienced a recent upswing, though for linguistic and media reasons this has been less recognized internationally.

The rest of this chapter revolves around cultural themes related to the fundamental bases of collaboration, divisions of labor and divisions of credit. A familiar production ideology is 'auteur theory.'<sup>xviii</sup> Though there are many facets to this description, theory, or production ideology, one strong and coherent facet revolves around the empowerment of one central individual, usually the director, who has authoritative control over the production process. The famous (at least in Denmark) 'creative team' idea underscores the collaborative dimension of film production and is advocated and taught at the National Film School of Denmark.<sup>xix</sup> In most renditions of the creative team the interaction of the producer, screenwriter, and director are seen as pivotal in the production process. However, this holds primarily at the project initiation or preproduction phase. When projects get into production, the centrality of the director is reasserted. As the former head of the producer education program at the National Film School of Denmark, Ole John puts it 'We are after all still director governed and we have of course to be that in the Danish and European [cinema], it is our tradition that naturally the director is the most important person.'<sup>xx</sup>

However, at least from a sociological perspective, a central question is what does the authority of the auteur ideology rest upon, and how is it contested or seen as legitimate by those in less privileged positions? In the section below, we explore this matter of the cultural underpinnings of directorial power by looking at conceptions of role, order, and hierarchy.

In a famous article, "Role as Resource in the Hollywood Film Industry," Baker and Faulkner find and explain what they call 'role consolidation' - expanding one's role, power and authority in the production process, a form of lateral imperialism.<sup>xxi</sup> What we find in the current Danish case is the opposite - instead of expansion, it is depth of activity and expression that matters most. Here two things are essential - an occupational creative space and artistic respect. These are mutually reinforcing. But this sets up a situation where the position of the director is respected, possibly not in exchange for, but part and parcel to respect for the other heads of creative

departments. There is a general consensus on the acceptance of the authority of the director, and a second basic maxim, that it is the overall good of the film that should be at heart for everyone, and not individual expressive opportunities. The former notion is exemplified by the following quote from an established elite editor:

'You have to accept that it's the director's film, its that simple. I accept that it isn't my film. But this is my interpretation. And we get allot of credit. In the branch we know what each other do and how great a job it is.' We hear the same notion form a leading cinematographer, 'how we tell the story [is] based on the vision of the director. ... [the cinematographer's job is] to capture the visions of the director and both technically and artistically convey that vision through practical work that on the screen is the expression that the director wanted, while at the same time one can heighten that expression, so as a collaboration partner the expression can be even better than what the director wanted.' Thus in the perspectives of both editors and cinematographers there is submission to the ultimate authority of the director, while also carving out a niche for personal expression ('my interpretation') and occupational excellence (heightening the director's expression to exceed the director's expectations). The second maxim, which puts limits on what should be done in and from these niches, is expressed in the invocation of the cliché 'kill your darlings' that we hear from several informants, as well as the more specific explanation that shots may be 'too beautiful' or 'too interesting' or that editing might be 'too daring' and divert attention from the story (the director's primary area of concern) to the individual accomplishments of the cinematographer or editor. In other words, the part temporarily overshadows the whole.

In the quotations above, we see a subscription to this basic perspective – it is not a matter of finding and imposing one's own vision or imprint, but rather using one's skill to lift or elevate the director's vision; to use one's skill, imagination and ingenuity not to create something other, but to work within the given parameters to obtain the best possible result. Most of our interviewees categorize themselves as a type of craftsperson or artistic craftsperson to capture this specialist creative contributory role. A leading cinematographer fuses artistic expression and career in the craftsperson concept – 'to have a career is as I see it to be a good craftsperson, to express oneself artistically is why we do it, or why I do it.' An editor highlights the limited ambit of their occupation through the craftsperson concept – 'We [editors] are a bunch of craftspeople, we are not the ones who have constructed the project.' In the context of this study, we see how the craftsperson concept becomes a central cultural notion, solidifying a division of labor, a social order, an orientation towards production work, and subjective career aspirations and assessments.

Subscription to these two maxims does not mean that everyone works in the same manner. On the contrary. Among three of the foremost editors in Danish film we find three very different approaches to collaborative work (i.e. production orientations). These craftspeople ply their trade in different manners. And these lead to different types of work reputations that lead to appealing to various types of directors and thus form career, as two types of assessments are common when making hiring decisions: what the person can do – what types of films, what styles they have done? and how they do things, that is to say, how they accomplish their work and how they collaborate?

One editor describes the best way of working in this manner: ‘I like working in this way – You are alone. ... If you are sitting there with the director there is no one to make decisions. It will be some sort of collective residue. Its better that there is one person to make decisions. Me [laughs]. And then the director comes in and says ‘No that is not what I imagined,’ or ‘gosh, I never could have imagined that [in a positive tone]. But if you’ve done it together, there is no one who can say that. It doesn’t work if you are two together. It needs to go back and forth.’ Another editor says editing ‘is a trust relationship. When I say its OK its based on his [the director’s] criteria that I say its OK.’ This is based on extensive collaboration – ‘We knew each other so well because we did so many films together that when I say this, he knows what it means.’ And the ‘this’ is synonymous with what the director thinks. A third sits there with the director and they experiment their way through the process: ‘I think that one of the reasons why people want to work with me is because things simply don’t end up in conflicts, one shouldn’t sit there and discuss things to death, you should just try them and do it. .. and the new technology makes it possible.’

Though subscribing to the same cultural dictate about hierarchy and deference, we see three different approaches to practical work. The first editor sits alone and makes authoritative decisions based on a personal interpretation, which is then presented to the director as a coherent proposal for approval or further modification. The second editor assumes or appropriates the perspective of the director, which is possible due to extensive previous collaboration, and views the material and edits in accord with the director’s personal vision and ideas as a type of surrogate. The third editor brings personal interpretations to an ongoing and interactive collaboration based on a mutual openness towards trying anything suggested by the director or the editor and seeing how it works, rather than debating the merits of different options in abstraction . In other words, the cultural norm of deference to the director and respecting his or her authoritative role can lead to three rather different expressions of deference in practice, based on capabilities, and preferences entangled with experience.

Embedded in the quotations and perspectives above one can see both self-limitation and challenge. Again, these two concepts or phenomena are

linked to each other in another cultural ideal and practice that is has been current and professed within the Danish film industry. This has to do with the virtues of working under constraints; in other words, artistic challenge and accomplishment arises out of finding the means for extracting maximal effect within a given set of parameters, rather than seeking to expand or exceed these parameters. This is a basic pedagogical form used at the National Film School of Denmark, where the students are given very specific and limiting parameters to work under in their exercises. The most well-known manifestations of this cultural ideology are the Dogme 95 rules and the film *the Five Obstructions*, but as argued here, this ideology or cultural understanding is more pervasive, personally held, and secures self-limitation,

an acceptance of parameters, role constriction, a division of labor, as well as delimited aspirations and acceptance of creativity from collaborators.

A second factor that secures the legitimacy of the auteur ideology is the fact that trust is accorded and credit, both formal and informal, is dispersed throughout the productions teams. Trust is essential in creating the restricted but free creative space that our informants prize deeply as it allows them to make significant, creative contributions. In the term of one editor, 'Trust is one of the biggest factors. You only get better if someone has undoubting trust in you. You are only as good as you are allowed to be. If people don't have trust, you cannot do anything.' So trust is the essential phenomenon at the creation end. Credit becomes important for sustaining creative inputs systemically as well as subjective sustenance, as recognition both rewards and provides professional guidance beyond narrowly proximate assessments. As one editor states 'We are vain and insecure and we are made of soft stuff and we like accolades. Recognition means incredibly much, not just to me.'

A third central factor that evidences and appears to make the 'auteur' ideology socially function is an interesting role reversal involving care. As we saw above, the vision and authority of the director is paramount. However, from cinematographers, producers, and editors we hear an almost unanimous cultural portrayal of the director as a vulnerable person in need of being cared for.<sup>xxii</sup> In explaining the occupational skills required for editing, one editor segues directly from empathy in order to understand characters in films to empathy for real life directors; '[editing] demands immense psychological understanding and empathy, in part to deal with characters, but also in collaboration with directors, because directors are often very, I don't want to say neurotic people, but very sensitive people. In a way it demands a certain degree of psychological insight and competence into how to just deal with them and get them through the process alive and well.... You have to have the competence that radiates that it all will turn out OK. And that you have control - 'you shouldn't be afraid, it will turn out well and we can do it.'" Another editor gives a more 'structural' explanation of the vulnerable and sensitive situation directors are in as the reason for caring for them in a particular manner, 'it can be a very violent thing to stick your fingers into someone's lifeblood, someone's story, that they may have fought for years for,

to collect money for the project, to work on the manuscript and develop it. There is an incredible amount of prestige built up in directors.' One cinematographer succinctly sums up what we have heard from several other cinematographers, 'On set you need to display confidence. You need to convince the director and crew that no matter what happens we will find a solution and it will be good.' Evident in most interviews is that successfully guiding the process of collaboration with directors, which is very personal and can take many forms as displayed above, is a point of tremendous pride and satisfaction for editors, cinematographers and producers.

A fourth support for the 'auteur ideology' comes from what could be called 'lieutenanthship,' defined here as the central authority over a given jurisdiction but under the command of a higher authority. This gets at the literal meaning of the word as the holder or central figure in a certain space, or more abstractly, domain. Here a number of the factors mentioned above come together – being at the top of one pyramid, but not the whole pyramid, being seen and respected as the ultimate authority in a given realm, enjoying trust, recognition and respect for one's creative contributions – what could be described as a fiefdom or sphere of contingent autonomy.

*Reinvention of oneself*

We see an interesting confluence of desire for challenge and self-limitation in another widespread prescription heard from our informants about the need to 'reinvent' oneself. This may seem paradoxical being that the sample comprised of the most successful practitioners in their occupations in Denmark, who at the time of interview were very much in demand. This fact all the more displays the power of this cultural notion. At one level this cultural dictum was presented as a rather objective career 'labor market issue.' There were a couple of slants on this way of explaining this way of presenting the issue. One is that one has to resist being categorized, being put in a box and labeled as this or that type of editor or cinematographer, i.e. display that one can do different types of things, sometimes across genres, sometimes across budgetary categories. The other has to do with combatting the issue of biological and career age,xxiii and the need to present oneself as 'fresh' at some point. At another level we hear explanations that resonate more with subjective career considerations. Both these elite and well-established editors and cinematographers spoke of reinventing oneself to be able to discover different sides of themselves and build partnerships with new, and often younger directors in order to do so. Here we see the necessity as dependent artists or craftspeople to build new relationships in order to practice and develop their talent and expression, with an awareness that one will only be able to make a limited number of films in one's career, and that one never can know when and how one's career can end. Often these two levels are combined, as in the following quote from an editor, 'If I could wish for something for myself it would be to reinvent myself. Because we have so little time. I'm fortunate that I've been visible, but one can extremely quickly be forgotten. Lack of visibility come with age, it comes with age.'

Another proof, in line with Sewell's quote in the introductory section above, of the centrality of this notion of reinvention is the fact that some contest it as a legitimate dictum. A cinematographer contends, 'I don't think one can reinvent oneself all the time. I think you do the same thing every time, but you refine it each time. You cannot adapt to 'this is in fashion now, or that is in fashion now.' Then its superficial and you are not yourself. That gets seen through really fast. It has to be authentic and come from inside you, otherwise you cannot stand there in a situation and make a quick decision if it should be like this or like that. You have to trust your intuition and you can only do that if you are totally yourself with it.' This cinematographer questions both the possibility and wisdom of breaking from a successful professional 'habitus.'

Interestingly enough one of the editors who talked about an actual personal reinvention process also talked in a different context about the absolute necessity of trusting one's intuition and 'musicality.' This raises the issue of what gets altered in a reinvention process; is it a social and relatively superficial process or a deep reorientation of judgment and taste down to the intuitive and musicality levels? According the cinematographer quoted directly above, improvement and refinement is possible and desirable, but reinvention is inauthentic and leads to practical, creative and artistic problems.

Reinventing oneself in one's present occupation rather than progression to other roles or occupations in search of more challenge, expressive opportunity or control can be interpreted as a contextually and culturally logical career process, responding to desires for challenge, but also framed within the cognitive and cultural mindscape of the upper echelons of the Danish film industry.

### **Conclusion**

In sum, what appears to hold together the auteur ideology, and its constituent stable production and career roles are several different but intertwined cultural notions that are invoked in different manners. We have seen how opportunities for and acceptance of artistic expression within constraints, which is culturally supported in the Danish film industry; the 'craftsperson' ideology which prizes attention to detail and minute expression while once again leaving the overarching design or 'architecture' to others; the opportunity to exert and develop managerial skills (over other lower-ranking work crews and thus increasing amenity towards hierarchy in general and one's lower rank than the director); and the opportunity to reverse this rank with regard to 'care' for the director all enjoy cultural support within the Danish film industry.

Interestingly, all of this is accomplished without recourse to the most common legitimating notion associated with auteur theory – the ‘genius’ of the director. In part this is due to the fact that the persons and occupational categories featured in this study are those who work most intimately and collaboratively with directors, and therefore, to use a cinematic allegory, are behind the curtain in Oz and not just see, but also contribute to the making of the Wizard. That is to say they are aware of the co-authorship and their roles in this process – artistically, technically, and emotionally – which both makes the auteur visible to the mass audience on the other side of the curtain, and them capable of receiving the recognition and accolades of colleagues who see or know what goes on behind the curtain. As embedded in the arguments above, a strong argument can be made for the support at the level of other A-function holders for the ‘auteur’ system is that it, as culturally defined, supported and practiced in Denmark, possibly paradoxically, makes individual contributions and differences possible, notable and recognizable.

In other words, protection of the auteur is protection of the protector and respector of the artistic craft space and work of central collaborators. This contributes both to career satisfaction, and the development of and support for this general way of working. It is also the antithesis of another key cultural concept in the Danish film industry – the villainous ‘work by committee’ and ‘producer-steered production’ that is associated with and found contemptuous in much TV production in Denmark and Hollywood film production.

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<sup>i</sup> John T. Caldwell. *Production Culture: Industrial Reflexivity and Critical Practice in Film and Television*, (Durham: Duke University Press, 2008), 14.

<sup>ii</sup> John T. Caldwell. *Production Culture: Industrial Reflexivity and Critical Practice in Film and Television*, (Durham: Duke University Press, 2008), 14.

<sup>iii</sup> Michael Arthur, Douglas Hall and Barbara Lawrence. "Generating New Directions in Career Theory: The Case for a Transdisciplinary Approach," in *The Handbook of Career Theory*, edited by Michael Arthur, Douglas Hall, and Barbara Lawrence (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1989), 8.

<sup>iv</sup> Chris Mathieu. "Careers in Creative Industries: An Analytical Overview," in *Careers in Creative Industries*, edited by Chris Mathieu (New York: Routledge, 2012).

<sup>v</sup> Daniel Bertaux. "Social genealogies commented on and compared: an instrument for observing social mobility processes in the 'Longue Duree.'" *Current Sociology* 43 (1995); Daniel Bertaux, and Martin Kohli. "The Life Story Approach: A Continental View," *Annual Review of Sociology* 10 (1984).

<sup>vi</sup> Jesper S. Pedersen and Chris Mathieu. "Udviklingstræk I dansk film 1995-2007," in *Dansk film I krydsfeltet mellem samarbejde og konkurrence*, edited by Chris Mathieu and Jesper S. Pedersen (Lund: Ariadne förlag, 2009). See also recent (2011) successes for Danish film at the Academy Awards and European Film Awards.

<sup>vii</sup> Chris Mathieu and Sara Malou Strandvad. "Is This What We Should Be Comparing When Comparing Film Production Regimes? A Systematic Typological Scheme." *Creative Industries Journal* 1 (2008); Sara Malou Strandvad and Chris Mathieu. "Den danske model – hvad består den af?" in *Dansk film I krydsfeltet mellem samarbejde og konkurrence*, edited by Chris Mathieu and Jesper S. Pedersen (Lund: Ariadne förlag, 2009).

<sup>viii</sup> William H. Sewell Jr. *Logics of History: Social Theory and Social Transformation* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 2005) 174.

<sup>ix</sup> Paul DiMaggio. "Why Cognitive (and Cultural) Sociology Needs Cognitive Psychology," in *Culture in Mind: Toward a Sociology of Culture and Cognition*, ed. Karen A. Cerulo (New York, Routledge, 2002), 274-275.

<sup>x</sup> Ann Swidler. "Culture in Action: Symbols and Strategies," *American Sociological Review* 51 (1986); Ann Swidler. *Talk of Love: How Culture Matters* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 2001)

<sup>xi</sup> Hans Joas. *The Creativity of Action* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1996).

<sup>xii</sup> Swidler, *Talk of Love*, 13.

<sup>xiii</sup> Swidler, *Talk of Love*, 15.

<sup>xiv</sup> Swidler, *Talk of Love*, 22-23.

<sup>xv</sup> As this chapter focuses primarily on the 'auteur ideology' and what cultural notions promote subscription to this ideology, it is primarily those in less privileged positions – i.e. cinematographers and editors – who are quoted here.

<sup>xvi</sup> One film was used as a cut off for regular work as many people do not work just on features, but also documentaries, shorts or in TV.

<sup>xvii</sup> Mette Hjort. *Lone Scherfig's "Italian for Beginners"* (Seattle: University of Washington Press; Copenhagen: Museum Tusulanum, 2010); Mette Hjort. *Small Nation, Global Cinema* (Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press, 2005); Mette Hjort. *Dekalog 01: On The Five Obstructions* (London: Wallflower Press, 2008); Mette Hjort and Scott MacKenzie. *Purity and Provocation: Dogme 95* (London: The British Film Institute Publications, 2003). Chris Mathieu. "Transforming the Danish

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<sup>xxiii</sup> For recent treatments, see Caldwell, *Production Culture*; Sara Malou Strandvad. “Organizing for the auteur: a dual case study of debut filmmaking,” *Northern Lights??* 201\*; Alexander Hicks and Velina Petrova. “Auteur Discourse and the Cultural Consecration of American Films” *Poetics* 34 (2006).

<sup>xix</sup> Heidi Philipsen. *Dansk films nye bølge – afsæt og aftryk fra den Danske Filmskole* (PhD diss. University of Southern Denmark/Syddansk Universitet, 2005). See also, Heidi Philipsen. “Spilleregler I filmskabelse – behjælpelige begrænsninger” in *Dansk film I krydsfeltet mellem samarbejde og konkurrence*, edited by Chris Mathieu and Jesper S. Pedersen (Lund: Ariadne förlag, 2009).

<sup>xx</sup> Quoted in Strandvad “Organizing for the auteur,” p.\*\*.

<sup>xxi</sup> Wayne Baker and Robert Faulkner. “Role as Resource in the Hollywood Film Industry” *American Journal of Sociology* 97 (1991). This article deals with different roles than are given primary focus here, and the structural and historical context is also quite different, but the process and concept of role consolidation would be analytically applicable in any film industry.

<sup>xxii</sup> Our interviewees spoke universally in generic terms of ‘directors’ as a class, and not in terms of individual names, indicating that it probably is the role, more so than individual personality that produces vulnerability and the need to be cared for.

<sup>xxiii</sup> Anne Lincoln and Michael P. Allen. “Oscar et César: Deep Consecration in French and American Film Acting Careers,” in Chris Mathieu, ed. *Careers in Creative Industries* (New York: Routledge, 2012).